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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/661,113	09/12/2003	Kenneth J. Maloney	A02203US (98238.6)	6482

22920 7590 11/12/2004

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EXAMINER
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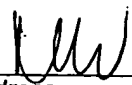
SOTELO, JESUS D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3617

DATE MAILED: 11/12/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/661,113	MALONEY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jesús D. Sotelo	3617	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 October 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 10, 11, 16, 17 and 41 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 12-15 and 18-40 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                        | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)               | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/1/2004</u>   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-41 are in the application.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Todd.

Todd discloses a catamaran, surface effect ship including a catamaran hull having a propulsion system including propeller 20, hulls with rounded bottoms and generally vertical side walls, flexible seals 56, 54, and a source of air to create an air cushion.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-5, 7-9, 23, 24, 26, 28-37, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cathers et al in view of Todd.

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Cathers et al discloses a catamaran, surface effect ship including a catamaran hull having a propulsion system including propellers 33, hulls with rounded bottoms and generally vertical sidewalls, control tabs 37, seals 24, 26, and a source of air to create an air cushion.

Todd discloses a similar vessel and teaches that the seals 54, 56 can be rigid or flexible.

In view of these disclosures, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to make the seals 24, 26 of Cathers flexible, generally as taught by Todd. Such an arrangement may be desirable to handle wave action, generally per the teachings of Todd.

6. Claims 6, 12-15, 18-22, 25, 27, 38 and 39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cathers et al in view of Todd as applied to claims 1-5, 7-9, 23, 24, 26, and 28-37 above, and further in view of Whitener.

Cathers et al discloses a catamaran having an air cushion and a propulsion system generally as claimed, except for the use of surface piercing propellers. Whitener discloses a similar type of watercraft and teaches the problem with the use of propellers on an air cushion vessel. Whitener teaches the option of using surface piercing propellers. In view of these disclosures, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to substitute for the propellers in the vessel of Cathers et al surface piercing propellers generally as taught by Whitener. The use of such propellers would have been desirable since the vessel would be lifting to the water surface.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

7. Claims 10, 11, 16, 17 and 41 are allowed.

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***Response to Arguments***

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to the rejected claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jesús D. Sotelo whose telephone number is 703-308-2563. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri. 6:00 AM -2:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samuel J. Morano can be reached on 703-308-0230. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
*Jesús D. Sotelo* 11/5/04  
**Primary Examiner**  
**Art Unit 3617**  
CPK 5-6D16 ☺

sotelo;jds  
November 5, 2004